

THE ECONOMY OF INDO-CHINA

mists of Tonkin make for difficulty in the dry season
as well Great
variability from one region to another, even nearby,
has made it
to organize a service which would link all the countries
of the colony.
A meteorological service must first be developed, with
a network of
observation posts in order to lessen the numerous
dangers.

Military aviation is the only branch that has made any
real headway.

These 'planes have been very useful to
administrators, in
Laos and Annam, where the distances are great and
present communications inadequate. Even there, heavy clouds and
uncharted mountain peaks make the trip hazardous. A notable
of

Lieut Guillaumot, from Vientiane to the Sino-Burmese
frontier, accom-
plished in spite of great difficulties, to the
wonderment of the
From this viewpoint, aviation has a distinct political
importance in
enhancing French prestige. Incidentally, the
geographical service has
profited by the photographic work of military aviators,

In addition to the local colonial aviation, there is
an important
international service connecting France with the
colony. In 1931 the
Marseille-Beirut line was prolonged to Saigon. This
had an
effect in facilitating close rektions with the mother
country. That
year, 1930, a Bureau of Air Travel was created and
pkced under the
Governor-General to co-ordinate all the governmental
services
to aviation.

Canals and Dykes

The discovery of the Inadequacy of the Mekong and
Red Rivers «
water highways was one of the early disflusionmoits of
French in
Indo-China. Both rivers flow from the high Chinese
the characteristic common to all tropical rivers of

floods with periods of winter dryaess. The gradient of
the Red River
is ten times that of the Mekong, so that it falls
predpltously to the
This has created the imperious necessity, **since** time
of
sheltering Tonkinese homes and rice~felds by means
of dykes. The
overflowing of the Mekong is_t on the contrary, of a
to local agriculture. The rich alluvial sail left by the
be duplicated by the torrential Red River, which must
be **in**
as the price of survival. The nature of tibe&e two
rivers, therefore, **has**
forced hydraulic agriculture to take the form of
dredging **in ODcfciot-**
China and of reinforcing the dykes **in**, Tonkin. of
must be utilized ia relation to the local
forms of irrigation,